



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

OHIO MAN SENTENCED ON COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT CHARGE

NEW HAVEN—Manpreet Singh, 22, of 7339 Craigmere Drive, Middleburg Heights, Ohio, was sentenced Thursday by Senior United States District Judge Ellen Bree Burns in New Haven for his conviction for conspiring to commit criminal copyright infringement.

Singh pleaded guilty to the charge on Feb. 20.

Burns sentenced Singh to three years of probation and ordered him to perform 300 hours of community service and to pay a fine in the amount of \$6,000, announced Kevin J. O'Connor, United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut.

“Software piracy is theft by criminals, plain and simple,” said U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Special Agent-in-Charge Robin Avers. “It is multi-billion dollar thievery, and ICE will continue to target and dismantle those criminal organizations that abuse the Internet by facilitating and participating in this activity.”

According to documents filed with the court, Singh was a participant in the “warez scene” – an underground online community that consists of individuals and organized groups who use the Internet to engage in the large-scale, illegal distribution of copyrighted software.

In the warez scene, certain participants (known as “suppliers”) are able to obtain access to copyrighted software, video games, DVD movies, and MP3 music files, often before those titles are available to the general public. Other participants (known as “crackers”) then use their technical skills to circumvent or “crack” the digital copyright protections. Others (known as “couriers”) distribute the pirated software to various file servers on the Internet for others to access, reproduce, and further distribute.

In pleading guilty, Singh admitted that he was a member of at least two leading warez groups – “We Love Warez” (“WLW”) and “Phase.” Singh also admitted that he acted as a distributor or “courier”

of pirated software and that he uploaded and downloaded numerous illegal copies to and from warez sites on the Internet.

“Stealing the intellectual property of others is no different from any other form of thievery,” U.S. Attorney Kevin J. O’Connor stated. “It is a priority of this office and the Department of Justice to protect the intellectual property rights of our nation’s inventors and creators”

This case was prosecuted as part of “Operation Safehaven”, a 15-month investigation conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the ICE Cyber Crimes Center, in conjunction with the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Connecticut and the Department of Justice, Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section (“CCIPS”).

This case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Maria A. Kahn and CCIPS Trial Attorney Kenneth L. Doroshow.

ICE

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